DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 331 397 HE 024 454

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TITLE Faculty Evaluation. Some Persistent Problems and Possible Solutions.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 13p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Advising; Committees; Evaluation Criteria; Evaluation Methods; *Faculty Evaluation; *Faculty Publishing; Faculty Workload; Graduate Students; Higher Education; *Teacher Administrator Relationship; Teaching (Occupation)

ABSTRACT

There are many problems common to faculty evaluation, in particular its subjective and unsystematic form. There are solutions to some of those problems. The first task is to delineate exactly what responsibilities faculty will be expected to perform. Too often so many tasks are expected of faculty that no one can complete them all well. Consequently, a mutually agreed upon set of tasks and ranking of their prominence may serve to moderate faculty workload and begin to clarify the evaluation procedure. Each of the specific areas where faculty are expected to perform (teaching, publication, student supervision, academic advising, graduate student supervision, committee work, community service), has its own challenges with regard to just evaluation. However, in all areas, the evaluation method and the weight to be given each type of work should be mutually agreed upon by faculty and administration together. Finally, Richard I. Miller has developed a system of overall faculty evaluation and a set of instruments for that purpose. Three examples of Miller's faculty overall performance ratings are attached in Appendix A. (Seven references) (JB)

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FACULTY EVALUATION

Some Persistent Problems and Possible Solutions

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April 1991

HE 024 454

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FACULTY EVALUATION

Some Persistent Problems and Possible Solutions

Faculty evaluation is mainly used by the administrators for selecting persons for promotion and merit increases. However, the procedures used for such decisions are often subjective and unsystematic. Subjective in the sense that written data is seldom collected and analyzed; unsystematic because the same criteria are not applied uniformly to all individuals. Now that faculties at most universities are unionized, it is important that each union works with administration to define criteria for evaluation that remove or at least minimize ambiguity and bias in their interpretation and application. This is likely to reduce the number of appeals made each year by faculty members.

The first and foremost question in faculty evaluation is what it is that is to be evaluated. This suggests that delineation of faculty responsibilities is imperative. Faculty, particularly at a small university, may be expected to engage in a wide variety of tasks. As a result, many faculty members may find themselves spread too thinly. Not only would it make their hours long, but it is also likely to affect the amount and quality of their performance.

In the experience of this writer, a member in a professional faculty at a small institution is assigned a full load of teaching, is asked to supervise pre-interns and interns, is expected to provide program counselling to students and supervise graduate students during independent study and/or research, is supposed to publish, be involved in committees (departmental, college, campus levels), expected to demonstrate some professional activity through inservice work or participation in a professional society. It is considered nice if s/he is also doing some community work.

First of all, it is unrealistic to expect that a faculty member will be able to perform all the above mentioned tasks satisfactorily in any one year. Secondly, it would be difficult for a faculty member to maintain a reasonable quality in his/her performance in all the areas. It is, therefore, necessary that each faculty be given a choice in assignment of responsibilities and should also know the relative weight to be placed on each duty. This can be accomplished through negotiation between the administrator and the individual member. The Dean of a college, for example, would know what tasks are expected to be performed by the college in a year and could match these tasks with the indicated preference of individual members. Weight for each task should also be determined by the faculty member and the Dean in consultation. The importance of the task, the challenge it

imposes, the amount of time it might take to complete, the impact it is likely to have in achieving professional goals, are some of the factors that will influence the weight to be assigned. Here are some examples:

1. Teaching (no. of classes and sections) 100%
2. Teaching (50%), publications (25%), supervision of pre-interns and interns (25%)
3. Teaching (50%), committee work (25%), supervision of graduate students (25%)
4. Teaching (25%), program counselling (25%), professional activity (25%), community service (25%)

Thirdly, evaluation procedures for each task should be developed by the faculty and administration together. This is a time-consuming and frustrating area. However, an examination of the literature would provide some guidelines and ideas for their implementation. For example, evaluation of university teaching has received a great deal of attention by various writers. Murray (1980) who has published a comprehensive review of studies in this area, cautions against using student ratings as the only measure of teaching effectiveness. He argues that other measures such as curriculum development and preparation of teaching materials also provide important information about teaching. Cohen and McKeachie (1980) suggest that careful examination of the course design can reveal the degree of instructor's interest in teaching and his knowledge of the subject-matter.

instructor's interest in teaching and his knowledge of the subject-matter.

Many institutions use student ratings as an index of faculty teaching effectiveness. Although this practice has some merit, care should be taken in selecting or developing the instrument to be used, deciding the time for administering it, and in making inferences from the data. Hogan (1973) emphasized that it is necessary to have instructor ratings from at least six different courses in order to get a stable picture of an instructor's teaching effectiveness. Naftulin and his associates (1973) point out that there is some evidence that student ratings of teaching are more influenced by the style of presentation than by its substance. In discussing the relationship between student grades and their ratings of instructors, Murray states:

> Whereas there may be some doubt as to whether grades per se are a significant source of bias in student ratings, it seems well established that students who receive lower grades than they expected will be more negative than students whose expectations have not been disconfirmed. (p.24)

The procedure for evaluation of publications can be established without much difficulty. Publications can be categorized into books (original and edited), monographs, refereed journal articles, and non-refereed journal and newspaper articles. The weight for each type of publication has to be agreed upon by a faculty committee and the administration. The criteria for determining the quality of publications are (1) to look for the

number of citations a publications has received, and (2) to check if a publication has been indexed in a well-established source for research. The former is not easy; the latter is not difficult to use. As a matter of fact, Arlin (1978) used the second criterion to compare the quantity and quality of publications by education faculties across Canada.

Evaluation of supervision of pre-interns and interns can be done in a similar way as the evaluation of teaching. Systematic feedback from pre-interns and interns can be analyzed to determine the degree of a supervisor's effectiveness. Demonstration lessons by the supervisor can also be used as evidence of one aspect of the supervisory role. Model lesson plans prepared by the supervisor could be another criterion that may be used. The coordinator of Field Experiences may collect data from preinterns and interns by means of a questionnaire and pass them on to the individual faculty member to use the data as he or she wishes.

The effectiveness of student program counselling (academic advising) can be determined by analyzing the perceptions of advisees and, to a degree, by examining the number of class changes (drop and add) completed by one's advisees. Student drop-out rate and the number of advisees graduating, if used with care, could also shed some light on the effectiveness of the

advisor. The Coordinator of Student Program Counselling may be able to provide this type of information to faculty members who may use it with the Annual Information Form.

The quality of supervision of graduate students is not easy to determine objectively. An assessment of the product, whether a thesis or a paper, can be made by two or three peers on such bases as the significance of the study, research design, and thrust of findings. A thesis, parts of which have been published, should receive more credit than the one which receives minimal circulation/citation. A faculty member who is involved in the supervision of theses will be expected to provide information about the quality of the products.

Committee work is another area which is difficult to evaluate. Some assessment can be made of the quality of a committee report in terms of its thoroughness, clarity, and the impact its recommendations make on the institution's programs or policies. Consideration of credit for an individual's contribution will depend upon such factors as doing research, gathering data, chairing meetings, writing the report, and probably presenting the report. A faculty member who has done good work on a committee will be expected to provide evidence supporting his/her contribution.

Qualitative assessment of professional activity is another problem area. Factors such as the degree of participation in terms of whether it is one individual or a group of individuals, the nature of participation -- whether it is a paper, discussion, or chairing a panel, and the level of audience at which the activity has been performed - whether it is local, provincial, regional, national, or international, will have to be considered. The frequency of participation should be given an additional weight in the assessment. Similarly, organizing a seminar or a conference and holding office in an organization should receive consideration in terms of the nature and level of participation. Any effort to promote the institution to which one belongs - whether it is in terms of recruiting students, raising funds, obtaining grants or securing gifts should receive appropriate credit. The difficulty in evaluating these areas arises quite often because the criteria are not laid down ahead of time and they are not applied consistently at the time of annual review.

Community service is desirable if a faculty member has the time for it. There are two categories of such a contribution -- professional and non-professional. Professional service includes non-credit courses taught, and consultation provided to other agencies. Non-professional service refers to organizing community festivals, raising funds, participating in community education projects, and other volunteer jobs. Consideration of

community service would be appropriate in the overall evaluation of a faculty member, provided some guidelines have been developed to facilitate evaluation.

It should be noted that the onus is on individual faculty members to provide all the information about his/her performance and contributions and submit all the necessary documents to the Dean before the review process begins. The role of Department Head and Peer Review Committee is to evaluate one's performance on the basis of documentary evidence using the criteria approved by the Faculty.

Centra (1979) suggests that peers at other institutions can also provide confidential assessment of a faculty member. There is some merit in this but it has some limitations also. External peers may be knowledgeable about one's research and publications but not necessarily about other aspects of one's performance.

As pointed out earlier, the procedure for evaluation and the weight assigned to each criterion should be mutually agreed upon by the faculty and the administration. There is no doubt that the element of subjectivity would be most difficult to remove from evaluation of one's performance. Miller (1972) has discussed the procedures for faculty evaluation in detail and has provided sample instruments that can be modified for use by faculty and administration. He uses the term "criterion rating",

"raw score", and "composite score" in his examples. The criterion rating is determined by dividing the total rating score by the number of items rated. For example, if on student evaluation forms using 7-point scale the gross score is 79 for the 13 items, then 79 divided by 13 gives the interim rating of 6.1. Raw score is determined by multiplying weight to the category by criterion rating. Composite score is determined by dividing the total raw score by the total score possible. Three examples of faculty overall performance ratings from Miller are enclosed in Appendix A. Detailed explanations are provided in Miller's book.

It is hoped that the suggestions presented above would help to increase objectivity in the difficult process of evaluation. Such an objectivity is likely to lead to better self-perception on the part of faculty. Improvement in evaluation would also lead to better inter-personal relationship between faculty and administration, individual faculty and peers, and faculty and students.

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Table 8.

Professor A	*Percent of Total Effort*		*Criterion Rating*		*Raw Score*
1. advising	10	×	6.3	=	63
2. teaching	50	×	6.1	=	305
3. faculty service	10	×	5.9	=	59
4. administration	—				
5. the arts	—				
6. professional status	10	×	4.9	=	49
7. publications	10	×	4.3	=	43
8. public service	10	×	4.9	=	49
9. research	—				
	100%				568
Composite Score	568 ÷ 700 = .81				

Table 9.

Professor B	*Percent of Total Effort*		*Criterion Rating*		*Raw Score*
1. advising	10	×	6.2	=	62
2. teaching	80	×	6.0	=	480
3. faculty service	10	×	5.7	=	57
4. administration	—				
5. the arts	—				
6. professional status	—				
7. publications	—				
8. public service	—				
9. research	—				
	100%				599
Composite Score	599 ÷ 700 = .86				

Table 10.

Professor C	*Percent of Total Effort*		*Criterion Rating*		*Raw Score*
1. advising	—				
2. teaching	100	×	6.3	=	630
3. faculty service	—				
4. administration	—				
5. the arts	—				
6. professional status	—				
7. publications	—				
8. public service	—				
9. research	—				
	100%				630

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